

<b>SUBJECT: Employee Assistance Program</b>	NUMBER: 1-26.01
EFFECTIVE DATE:	REVIEW DATE:
NMMLEPSC STANDARDS: PER.11.01	APPROVED: Sheriff

## **I. PURPOSE:**

An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a voluntary, work-based program that offers free and confidential assessments, short-term counseling, referrals, and follow-up services to employees who have personal and/or work-related problems. EAPs address a broad and complex body of issues affecting mental and emotional well-being, such as alcohol and other substance abuse, stress, grief, family problems, and psychological disorders. The EAP provides assessment, counseling, and referral services designed to assist employees in resolving personal problems in a confidential, appropriate and timely problem assessment services which may impair job performance, thereby enhancing productivity and reducing absenteeism and turnover.

## **II. ELIGIBILITY:**

All full-time, part-time, and temporary employees are eligible to access the services of the EAP at any time. Members of employees' immediate families, living in their households, are also eligible.

## **III. CONFIDENTIALITY:**

Successful treatment of personal problems requires strict confidential management of each case. All records, contacts, and referrals will be treated in a strictly confidential manner. Notwithstanding any other provision of this policy, exceptions regarding confidentiality may be made in cases where the employee's behavior indicates imminent danger to himself/herself or others or in cases of suspected child abuse where state law mandates reporting.

## **IV. REFERRAL TO EAP:**

### **A. Self-Referral**

1. The employee contacts Valencia County Human Resources or the designated EAP coordinator and makes an appointment.
2. Records: All communications between the employee and the EAP Coordinator will be held in confidence. Information will be released only with written permission of the employee and only to individuals designated by the employee.

3. Appointments that cannot be scheduled for non-working hours, the employee may use approved sick leave or annual leave.

#### B. Supervisor Referral

1. An employee is formally referred to the EAP by a supervisor who has been trained in the program services. This referral to the EAP is to be used as a tool to assist the supervisor and the employee in taking steps to improve the employee's work performance. A formal supervisory referral should be used in conjunction with the department's discipline policy. Formal supervisory referrals may be used in any of the following circumstances:
  - a) Continued decline in job performance after normal disciplinary action;
  - b) Continued job-related critical incidents after normal disciplinary action; or
  - c) A single serious job-related critical incident or sudden serious decline in job performance.
2. The supervisor will counsel the employee with written documentation of an employee's poor work performance on the county's disciplinary action form. "The supervisor should not attempt to determine the specific nature of or personally treat the problem. THE EMPLOYEE'S PERSONAL PROBLEMS SHOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH OTHERS."
3. Records pertaining to disciplinary action relating to job performance will continue to be retained in the employee's official employment record.

- C. Cost of Services: The cost of initial assessment, counseling, and referral services will be paid for by the County of Valencia. More extensive services may be paid through the employee's health benefit program or by the employee. The EAP Coordinator will assist the employee in determining the anticipated cost and methods of payment before the referral is made for treatment services.